



Verona Area First Five Years
SUPPORTING All Families Every Step of the Way

Verona Area First Five Years January Newsletter



Pyramid Model

Social/Emotional Tip of the Month

This month we will be sharing calm down techniques for your child (or you!) to use when managing big feelings.

Deep breathing can slow the heartbeat, lower or stabilize blood pressure, lessen anxiety and signal the nervous system to calm down. The most effective deep breathing is in through the nose and out through the mouth. Intentionally teaching your child how to take big deep breaths when calm will increase the likelihood the strategy will be used when experiencing big emotions. An adult can start by modeling the practice by taking deep breaths in through their nose and out through their mouth while describing what they are doing.

Modeling deep breaths is appropriate for all ages, infants to teenagers! To practice taking deep breaths, children ages 2-6 can use pinwheels, bubbles or feathers and watch them move when they use their deep breaths. Children can also just use their imaginations. Have your child pretend to smell a flower and blow out a candle or smell a bowl of soup and then blow on it to cool it down. For more ideas or visuals to support practicing this skill, visit this link:

<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Smell-Blow.pdf>

Take a Deep Breath

Smell the flower



Blow the pinwheel



Some children will need more than deep breaths to calm down. There are lots of calming activities and options to look through. Think about what your child enjoys or can focus on for longer periods of time to determine what might work for them. It is usually helpful if you can show them a visual of the calm down strategy or provide them with a visual choice. For more ideas of calming activities and visuals in multiple languages, visit this link:

<https://www.lizs-early-learning-spot.com/anger-management-23-calming-strategy-cards/>



Infants and young toddlers will need adult guidance to identify when they have big feelings and to engage in a calm down activity. Adults can help by labeling their feelings and modeling deep breaths. A special comfort item like a blanket or pacifier or a separate calm down space with lots of soft items may help. A calm adult may need to offer a hug, sing a quiet song or read books to help the child get their body calm.

Older children can be more independent in recognizing their feelings and selecting a calm down strategy to use. Even older children may just need time in a calm down space, doing a quiet activity or with a comfort item. Other children may benefit from getting some pressure or input into their hands, mouths or other body parts. For these children activities like playdough, squeezing a stress ball, hugging something, chewing gum or pushing a wall may work. You can trace your child's hands, cut them out and tape them on a wall. This can act as a visual reminder for what your child can do when they need to calm down. Children who like to move might need to go for a walk, stretch or do some yoga.





Incoming Kindergartener Information Night

For current Pre-K families going into Kindergarten

Thursday, January 8th 2026 6:00-7:00pm at Sugar Creek Elementary School

Learn about Verona Area School District's educational options, talk with all elementary schools, registration, and the placement request process.

Pre-K Information for incoming students for 2026-2027

There has been a lot happening behind the scenes to get ready for registration next year due to a change in the state budget. We are getting closer to having all the information ready. The goal is information to be available on the [VAFFY website](#) by the middle of January, informational meetings in February and Open House dates in March. Thank you for your patience as we try to make the changes necessary to make the registration process easier for families.

Family Engagement

Positive Solutions for Families

This FREE workshop is designed to provide families of young children (3-8 years old) methods and strategies to promote positive behavior. **CHILD CARE PROVIDED!!**

Day: Mondays

Time: 6:00-7:30pm

Dates: January 26 - March 16 (7 weeks) No class Feb. 16th

Location: Boys & Girls Club, 4619 Jenewein Rd, Fitchburg, WI 53711

Contact: Maggie Pfeil, 608-313-5197, pfeilm@verona.k12.wi.us

Open Gym

Develop motor and social skills with your children ages 0 to 5 in a fun and safe environment

FREE!!

LOCATION: Boys & Girls Club (4619 Jenewein Rd., Fitchburg WI, 53711)

DATES: MONDAYS from 5-6PM:

JANUARY: 5, 12, 26

FEBRUARY: 9, 23

MARCH: 2, 9, 16, 30

This is a peanut and tree nut free environment. Caregivers must remain with their children at all times. If you have any questions, please contact Gennine Castañeda-Butch at (608) 712-7222.



Community Resources

Bring on Spring Concert

**Saturday, February 7th 10-11am at the Performing Arts Center
at Badger Ridge Middle School
300 Richard St, Verona, WI 53593**



Enjoy a family friendly musical performance by David Landau. The kids will sing some, move some, act some, dance some, shout just a little bit, and laugh a bunch.